Nonpoint Source Management Program :: Agriculture



The primary agricultural nonpoint source pollutant is sediment that is eroded from tilled fields, drainage ditches, irrigation channels and areas where livestock congregate. Sediment is the number one pollutant of streams and lakes in North Carolina. Sediment damages streams by burying aquatic organisms, clogging fish gills, reducing water clarity, and blocking light to aquatic plants.

Probably the second biggest pollutant of streams in North Carolina is nutrients. Excessive use of fertilizers causes nutrients to drain into streams and other surface waters. High concentrations of nutrients in water leads to overgrowth of algae, increased cloudiness, and fish kills. Agricultural operations may also contribute pesticides from crop production areas. The waste from animal operations and grazing lands can also contribute nutrients, bacteria, and pathogens to streams.

Agencies that address nonpoint source pollution from agriculture and funding sources for controlling agriculturally related nonpoint sources are listed below. The North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services? Pesticide Management Section of the Food and Drug Protection Division regulates pesticide use and disposal. Erosion control is primarily addressed through non-regulatory means such as cost-sharing implementation of best management practices (see below). Nutrient runoff from agricultural land is also often address through cost-shared projects, but within the Neuse and Tar-Pamlico River basins this source is also regulated by rule (provide links to these rules).

Funding Programs

The North Carolina Division of Soil and Water Conservation within the NC Department of Environment and Natural Resources coordinates several programs to assist with agricultural nonpoint source control. One of

these is the North Carolina Agriculture Cost Share Program, which is administered locally by a Soil and Water ConservationDistrict. The program cost shares for installation or use of Best Management Practices (BMP) that improve water quality at a 75% cost share (based on average cost of the BMP). To learn more about the program visit theirwebsite or contact your local Soil and Water Conservation District.

The Division of Soil and Water also has a Nonpoint Source Management Section that manages or coordinates several programs that are listed and identified on the Section?s webpage. Among these are funding programs like the North



The Nonpoint Source Management Section also coordinates the Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP)? which is a program of the US Department of Agriculture that cost shares to install BPs to address natural resoruce concerns. Under EQIP a conservation plan is developed for the land as well as a 5-10 year contract that provides incentive payments and cost share at the rate of 75%.

Agriculture Links

Regulatory Agencies

- North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services? Pesticide Management Section of the Food and Drug Protection Division
- Division of Soil and Water Nonpoint Source Management Section
- Guidance Specifying Management Measures for Sources of Nonpoint Pollution in Coastal Waters

Funding Sources

- North Carolina Agriculture Cost Share Program
 Soil and Water Conservation District
 North Carolina Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)
 Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP)